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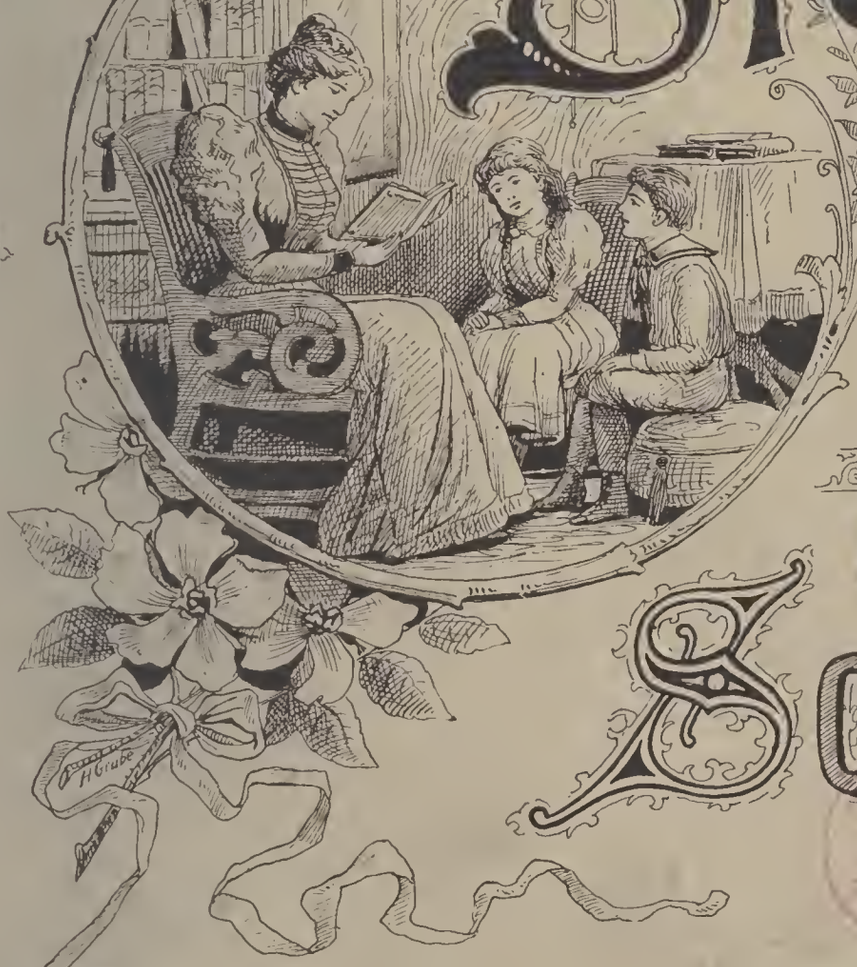
NAMELESS STORIES for HOME AND SCHOOL.



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CHICAGO

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NAMELESS STORIES

FOR

Supplementary Readings

AND

GENERAL EXERCISES.

BY

LIZZIE L. TRISTRAM.

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(Teacher's Library)
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A. FLANAGAN, PUBLISHER.

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Preface.

This book is intended only as a guide. The teacher using it will find it necessary to add more information matter after the answer has been guessed. For instance, in the lesson about the whale, talk of the way in which the whale is captured, how the oil is obtained. Measure the school room to give the children some idea of the size of the whale.

The author has found that the children enjoy a story more in which all can take part. The teacher should try to bring out as many points as possible.

A written reproduction should always follow the talk.

These lessons are very interesting for Friday afternoons.

These stories, like all others, have a better effect if told by the teacher, rather than read.

NAMELESS STORIES.

There is a plant you often see
  In gardens and in fields;
Its stalk is straight, its leaves are long
  And precious fruit it yields.

The fruit when young is soft and white,
  And closely wrapped in green;
And tassels hang from every ear,
  Which children love to glean.

But when the tassels fade away,
  The fruit is ripe and old;
It peeps from out the wrapping dry
  Like beads of yellow gold.

The fruit, when young, we boil and roast,
  When old, we grind it well.
Now think of all the plants you know,
  And try its name to tell.

WHO WERE THEY?

I.

Five little mates in wintry weather,
Side by side sat down together;
Crowded close in a tiny room,
Left to themselves in the dusky gloom.
They lived in love, no little brother
Pushing unkindly against another.
And they lived in hope, for they thought with glee,
When bed time comes we are all set free.

II.

Side by side in summer weather,
Five little mates ran out together:
Bare and free in the sunshine sweet,
Brown and strong and merry and fleet.
On the greensward soft they frolicked and played,
But apart from each other they never strayed.
They were one in friendship and glad endeavor,
The five little mates who quarreled never.

* * *

People have neighbors sometimes and because they do not like them they do not try to find out anything about them. Many times if they would only take time and watch them at work they would find that they can do many wonderful and interesting things.

One day I went into the barn and there I saw four of my near neighbors, who had moved unbeknown to me, carrying off my eggs. These gentlemen wore brown coats of fur, had black eyes and funny shaped ears. You never could imagine how they would carry away an egg. One of them would lie on his back and take the egg in his arms, and the other three would drag him away, egg and all. Although a great many people would have been afraid, I just stamped my foot and said to these gentlemen, "Scamper, you rogues," and they ran away quick as lightning, but not before I have time to call, "Here, kitty, kitty, kitty, come and catch these mischievous ———.

* * *

I grow on a plant that grows from two to four feet high. The plant has flowers that turn to pods, and the pods burst open and I pop out. The plant that I grow on must have very dry and warm ground to live in. After I am picked from the pod I am put in a machine to be separated from the seeds. Then I am made into cloth and sold. When people want to buy the cloth that is made from me they ask for (——?) cloth.

I do not grow on a tree, but I am made from the sap of a tree that grows where the weather is very hot. The people in these countries cut holes in the tree and the sap runs out into cups, and then they hold it over the fire and keep melting it and letting it dry, and then it is put into machines and made all ready for boots and rubbers. But the sap from which I was made was dried in the sun, so that I would be white, and then I was cut into a little block, but some of my brothers were put into the ends of pencils. Now I am sure you can guess my name.

* * *

I am one of America's greatest poets. I used to live in a large house set way back among the trees. The children used to come to my home and I loved to have them. On one of my birthdays they gave me a chair made from the wood of the chestnut tree that I wrote about. I wrote "Paul Revere's Ride" and "Daybreak," and several others that you children can recite. My name is ———.

* * *

Hundreds of years ago I was a beautiful fern tree and grew in a marsh with my brothers, but one day there was a great storm and we were blown down and sank way down into the earth. And the same sun that

gave us heat when we were trees gave us heat while we were in the ground. And now men dig us out of the ground to give back the heat that the sun gave to us. I am black and not very pretty, but I am a friend to every one in cold weather.

Can you guess my name?

* * *

I am called the cat's "big brother," because I have whiskers like the cat, and four feet and legs and ears and a tail like the cat, but I am very much larger and stronger and not nearly so gentle and tame. The cat eats mice and birds, but I eat larger animals and would eat men, too, if I could get them. My little brother, the cat, has a nice, warm chair to sleep in at night, but I have to sleep out in the woods. Men hunt us sometimes and kill us to get our skin. And then they make this skin into mats for the king and queen's throne. And they call them (——?) skin mats.

* * *

If I should ask you to go down town and carry the house that you live in on your back could you do it?

And yet I know of a little tiny bit of a tender animal which carries his house with him wherever he goes.

He is only an inch or two long, and seems to have four horns, but they are really feelers, and his eyes are at the end of these feelers. In the winter he goes into his house and stays there during cold weather and lives without food.

I was reading a story in a book the other day about a little girl who made a pet of one of these creatures. Her aunt found it, that is, she found its house, and did not know that there was a tenant in the house, and so she carried it home to her little niece. The little girl was very much delighted when the occupant came out.

They placed it in a plant jar of violets and a toy cup was also sunk in the sand for the animal to feed upon.

She declared one day that the creature knew her and that it would draw back into its shell when she spoke.

I saw her prove this to be so several times.

Can you tell the name of the little house carrier?

* * *

I want to tell you to-day about a little blood thirsty murderer—that is, he murders sleep, if he doesn't murder the persons who wish to sleep. They are found more especially near bodies of water, and the people who live

along the shores not only have to lock the doors and windows, but they have to bar them also.

And yet they get in. It would be some excuse for the little rascals, if it were a necessity of their existence to draw the blood of the giants they torment, but it is not. Let me tell you the right way for them to eat. They have a fringe of hair around their mouths and in the water they twirl these hairs around to cause tiny currents, which bring whatever food they want within reach. They breathe air through their tails, which are shaped like funnels. Their proboscis is a sort of hollow pipe with a very sharp point.

When they bite a person they thrust this tube into the skin and as soon as it reaches a vein they shoot down thro' it several lancets with barbed points notched like a saw, and then suck up the blood from the wounds. Not content with this they eject a powerful acid at the same time, which causes swelling and intolerable irritation and often serious sores.

And they sing a song, too, that grows rather monotonous if kept up for any length of time. In South America in some places these little tormentors go in such swarms that the people are obliged to bury themselves in the sand with only their heads sticking out, and that covered with a handkerchief.

It is never so bad as that here, but it is bad enough to make us wish sometimes that there were no —— and yet they, too, have their use.

* * *

Last night, as I walked along the street, I saw in a number of places groups of robbers. I thought to myself: "Those robbers are watching for men, to rob them of something that has been intrusted to their care, something a great Master has given them."

And as I walked on farther I met a man whom I recognized as my neighbor. He had a family of children at home that I knew needed food and clothing. But as I approached him I saw that these cruel robbers along the street had robbed him of his hard earned wages, and more than that, they had stolen his strength and even his mind so that he could not walk straight, and more than that, they had robbed him of his soul, for his Master had told him not to even look at the robbers, and he had gone where they were, and so the Master said: "He could not inherit the kingdom of Heaven." He went along the street staggering with his hat on one side, not knowing what he was saying or where he was going. And yet, children, this man allowed himself to be robbed. He might have turned away from those robbers, saying, "No, you cannot have my money; it be-

longs to my family." But the poor fellow had been robbed so many times that he was very weak and could not even defend himself. Perhaps you did not know that in our own country these robbers are allowed to stand on our streets and rob men. But they are, and you can see them every time you go to town. But always remember this: "They won't hurt you unless you are willing." They are shut up in glass houses and put in windows for men to see.

The glass houses are bottles, in each bottle there is a demon which is poison itself, and the name of that poison is ———.

* * *

There's a dandy little fellow,
  Who dresses all in yellow;
In yellow, with an overcoat of green,
  With his hair all crisp and curly,
In the spring-time bright and early.
  A tripping o'er the meadow he is seen.
Thro' all the bright June weather
  Like a jolly little tramp,
He wanders o'er the hillside, down the road,
  Around his yellow feather,
The gypsy fire-flies camp;
  His companions are the wood-lark
    And the toad.

Spick and spandy, little dandy;
Golden dancer in the dell;
Green and yellow, happy fellow,
All the children love him well.

But at last this little fellow
Doffs his dandy coat of yellow
And very feebly totters o'er the green,
For he very old is growing,
And with hair all white and flowing,
A nodding in the sunlight he is seen.

The little winds of morning
Come a'flying thro' the grass
And clap their hands around him in glee;
They shake him without warning;
His wig falls off, alas!
And a little bald head dandy now is he.

O, poor dandy, once so spandy,
Golden dancer on the lea!
Older growing, white hair flowing,
Bald head dandy now is he.
What is his name?

—*Selected.*

I called one day at the home of a friend and she showed me something which she laughingly called her pets. I thought that they were worms, but on looking closely I found that they had feet, and I knew they must be insects for worms have no feet.

My friend asked me to go with her to get some food for the worms, and we went to a mulberry tree and gathered some leaves. When we returned I watched the little creatures more carefully and found out many things about them. They were busy spinning and my friend asked me to come again in three or four days and see what change had taken place. This I did and found, not the worms as I had left them, but little balls of silk, tho' my friend told me that the worm was inside. Now, she said, if I leave these in a warm room the worm will soon cut a hole in the end of the cocoon and come out a beautiful butterfly. But I do not care so much for the butterfly as I do for the silk, so I shall put these balls into hot water to kill the moth inside. Then I shall send the cocoons to a city where the silk will be spun off. She told me she had made considerable money growing silk worms, because she needed but very little capital with which to start business, and it cost but very little to keep them. This riddle is not hard to guess, for you all know that silk, satin, velvet, etc., are made by the little ———, which really is no worm at all.

Yesterday I saw a feather from one of the largest birds in the world. This bird lives far away in a hot country where there are scarcely any trees, but for miles and miles you can see nothing but sand with the hot sun pouring down upon it. I am sure you would be frightened should you see one of these birds. It can run as fast as a horse, and is so strong that it can kill a large animal with one blow of its foot, tho' it has but two toes. Its long legs are not covered with feathers, but with a tough skin. There is a down on its long, slim neck.

Perhaps you will not call these birds very wise when I tell you that the men who hunt them sometimes put on skins of the birds, and the live birds think they belong to their flock. In this way they are caught. And sometimes when they see the men pursuing them they put their heads down in the sand and think that because they cannot see that they are hidden from the men. These birds eat grain, fruit and vegetables. They sometimes swallow stones, glass, pieces of wood, etc.

They do not build their nests as robins and blue birds do, but the father bird scoops out a hole in the sand and several of the mother birds lay eggs and the sun hatches them. Some of the eggs are left outside for the baby birds to eat.

The eggs are very large. One egg weighs as much as twenty-four hen's eggs. The shells are sometimes used for cups.

Look at your hats to-night, girls, and see if the feathers on it were taken from an ———.

* * *

There's a queer little house,
And it stands in the sun;
When the good mother calls,
The children all run.
While under her roof
They are cozy and warm,
Tho' the cold wind may whistle,
And bluster and storm.

In the day time the queer little house moves away,
And the children run after it, happy and gay,
But it comes back at night
And the children are fed,
And tucked up to sleep,
In a soft feather bed.

This queer little house has no windows nor doors;
The roof has no shingles,
The rooms have no floors;
No fire-places, chimneys,
Nor stoves can you see,
Yet the children are cozy
And warm as can be.

The story of this funny house is all true,
I have seen it myself and I think you have, too.

* * *

Last evening when I was in the book store a little boy came in and said he wanted something but had forgotten the name of it. Mr. Madon showed him several articles and Sammy finally found what he was looking for. I will describe it for you and see if you can guess the name. It was in the shape of an oblong block, was about a quarter of an inch thick, and would bend a little. The color was white. But this little block did not grow in such a shape, but was made from the sap of a very large tree that grows away off in the South land, where the weather is very hot. This tree grows 70 feet high sometimes, and the branches and leaves are all at the top. The fruit is not good to eat, yet it is a very valuable tree, for the juice is used for many

things. The sap is carried in a peculiar way to the factories, where the dirt is all cleaned out and it is made into large sheets, which are stamped for whatever purpose they may want them. It takes a long time for it to dry. Some of it is made into something that the boys are anxious to have in the winter time. Some of it is made into something that the children love to play with in the summer time. Some people wear false teeth, the plate of which is made of this material colored red. No doubt you have at home combs, buttons, knife handles, etc., and you have all seen machinery belts which were made of ———.

* * *

I was going down the walk,
So pleasant, cool and shady;
Right in the middle of the path,
I met a little lady.

I made to her my sweetest bow,
She only walked on faster;
I smiled and said, "Good morning, ma'am!"
The moment that I passed her.

She never noticed me at all;
I really felt quite slighted.
I thought, "I'll follow you—I will—
Altho' I'm not invited."

Perhaps you think me very rude,
But then, she looked so funny,
From head to foot, all dressed in fur,
This summer day so sunny.
She didn't mind the heat at all,
But wrapped the fur around her;
And hurried on, as if to say,
"I'll tend to my own gown, sir!"
I followed her the whole way home,
Her home was in my garden,
Beneath my choicest vines—and yet—
She never asked my pardon.
I never heard her speak a word;
But once I heard the miller,
Coming down the sidewalk say,
There goes Miss ———.

* * *

I am thinking of the largest animal in the world—not the largest fish, but animal. This animal lives in the water, but breathes air thro' its lungs. How do fish get air?

It must come up out of the water to breathe, because it would drown as we would if it depended on the water to give it air. It does not live in the lake,

but in the ocean. Its head is enormous. When it is hungry it opens its huge mouth and rushes thro' the water scooping up thousands of little fishes. The skin of this animal in some places is two feet thick. The Bible tells about a man who was swallowed up by a ———.

* * *

Once a gentle, snow white birdie
Came and built its nest
In a spot you'd never dream of;
In a baby's breast.

Then how happy, gentle, loving,
Grew the baby, Grace;
All the smiles and all the dimples
Brightened in her face.

But a black and ugly raven
Came, one morn, that way;
Came and drove the gentle birdie
From its nest away.

Ah! how frowning and unlovely
Was our Gracie then,
Until the evening brought the white dove
To its nest again.

Children, this was Gracie's raven,
This, her gentle dove;
In her heart a naughty temper
Drove away the ———.

—*Selected.*

* * *

FOR THE TEACHER.

One day I said to my class, "Not far from here there is a beautiful lake. I wish that you could see it as I did one night. Oh, I'm sure you never saw any thing so beautiful. I stood on the bridge over the river where I could look out on the lake.

On either side of the river, below and above the bridge, were boats and ships of different descriptions.

There were large boats besides the "hog boats," and there were schooners and sail boats, and on one side of the river, close to the bridge, was a tug, used—you know (explain) for what. On the other side was a boat house, where you could rent row boats. It was just at sunset and as I stood there I heard whistles. I saw the men hastening to swing the bridge and several row boats were making for the shore, because a large steam barge was puffing up the river. I thought I had never seen anything so grand and beautiful as that ship,

but as I glanced out on the blue waters so calm and still that evening and watched the sun like a huge ball of fire drop into the water (so it seemed) I thought, "surely, God's work is more beautiful than that of man."

I described the picture in my mind more fully and then asked if anyone could tell me the name of the river and the location. Strange to say, not all in the room knew that I meant their own Black River which they had crossed so many times and the same old Lake Erie on whose shores we, one day, illustrated our geography lesson. Since then I, with the children, have taken pleasure in describing some well-known spot in as pretty a way as possible, leaving the location for the others to guess.

* * *

Let me tell you of a little visitor who makes all his calls in the winter time because it is too hot in the summer for his health. When it is summer with us he retires to the mountains and, with his neighbors, goes to housekeeping. He comes to see us about the middle of October. He begs for most of his food, but is willing to work very hard. He is an early riser, and often times calls before breakfast time.

His suit of clothes is of several colors—slate color, brown and white. It may seem that he has not sufficient clothing, but I heard of his telling a little girl one day that there is one who has clothed him warm enough.

He feeds upon seeds of weeds that grow in sheltered places. Can you tell me the name of this cold weather visitor?

* * *

There is a kind of oak tree which grows in a foreign country, and it has a thick, tough bark which is used for several purposes. You know that if you take the bark off some trees they will die, but not so with this one. The tree must be about twenty-five years old before the bark is used; and it grows from twenty to sixty feet high. Acorns grow on this tree, and they taste like chestnuts. The first bark that grows on the tree is not used, but is taken off that more may grow. The bark is cut in long slits and then cross cut, and the pieces cut in this way are taken off. The bark is light and will float, hence fishermen use it for buoys, and it is also used for life belts.

Because it is light it is used for shoe soles, and because it is elastic and waterproof it is made into shape and pressed into bottles and casks, and we call it ———.

A great many queer things happen in this world; and, just by chance this morning, I saw one of them. We have an aquarium at home where we keep little gold fish and other little water animals. Can you tell me what we give them to eat? One of the tenants of this glass house is a well-known friend of yours, but perhaps I know it better than you do. Let me describe the little fellow and see if you will recognize him. He is not a handsome fellow by any means. He has a very large mouth, and his body is covered with a thick, rough skin. He feeds on insects, but never chases them. He does not eat dead insects, but waits until a fly or bug comes near to him and then darts out his tongue so rapidly that the little victim cannot escape. He swallows his food whole. He sleeps in some out-of-the-way place during the day, but toward evening comes out and waits for prey.

But now I must tell you of the wonderful thing that I saw this morning. As I stood watching my pets I noticed that this young fellow had a crack on his back. I did not know what had caused this, but presently he hopped upon the stones I had made a rock work of and began to wriggle about. Pretty soon I saw that he was pulling his head and arms through this hole on his back. Then he proceeded to unbutton his waistcoat

and to take off his whole suit; but he had on a nice new suit under the old one, and he looked very fine in his shining new clothes. I wondered what he would do with his old suit. There were no closets nor clothes bags in the aquarium and I began to think I should have to reach in and get them, but I did not have to. My friend took care of them himself. He sat still for a few moments enjoying the change and then he took up the old suit and, remember now I am telling you the truth, he rolled it up carefully and then swallowed it. Can you tell me the name of this funny fellow?

❊ ❊ ❊

Children! I know of a beautiful white temple which has been on the earth not more than eight years. It is unlike other temples which you have seen, for it has only two windows, but the windows are provided with blinds and shutters. It has a good strong foundation, but it must be kept in good repair or the temple will soon lose its beauty.

A stove is kept in this temple day and night, summer and winter. The stove should be given fuel about three times a day; and the stove like a furnace sends heat over the whole temple just as the steam warms our

school-rooms. The roof of the temple is hard and firm, and built in such a way that nothing can penetrate it, but the roof is covered with shingles just the same for the sake of beauty. I know of some temples with black shingles, some red and some golden and some brown, but almost always when the temple has been on the earth sixty or seventy years these shingles turn white, and we talk about the "frost of years."

If these temples are used well they will stand a long time, but if they are abused they quickly resent it. They are God's property, and he has said, "Whosoever shall befile the temple of God him will I destroy." Children, I see forty such temples before me now, and I hope and pray that God, who is the maker and keeper of all of them, will see the work he assigns them well done.

* * *

Gerty went into the parlor for her checker-board one evening, and what do you thing she saw? Two round, fiery eyes staring right out of the dark!

How her little heart did beat. She had just been listening to a story about a tiger that broke loose from a menagerie, and she thought that these great eyes looked exactly like a tiger's. "If I run away it will

chase me," she said to herself. "I will do as the man did in the story. I will look at it steadily and cower it with my glance." So Gerty stared at the big, bright eyes and the big, bright eyes stared at Gerty.

And then Gerty saw that the animal had two scoop shaped ears on top of its head. And then she saw that it had a striped body and a long tail and had four feet and crept along very stealthily and kept getting nearer and nearer. And presently Gerty discovered that it had on a coat and the coat was shiney and smooth. And as she looked more closely into its eyes she saw that the black spot in the center was round; and Gerty had time to find out all these things before the animal sprang at her, for she soon saw that it was not a tiger, but a cousin of the tiger's, belonging to the same family, but not so large and strong.

So when it came up and rubbed against her she was not afraid of it, but just picked it up in her arms and said: "You naughty ——— to scare me so."

The next day she looked at its eyes again and found that the spot was a different shape, and she asked her mamma to tell her why. Then she counted its toes and found—how many? What else did she notice about its foot and toes?

Hundreds and thousands of years ago I was a beautiful fern tree. I grew with my brother and sisters to a great size. But after a while we were blown down and more fern trees grew in our places. And in course of time they, too, fell down and met us down deep below.

And the same sun which shines for you to-day, giving life and brightness and happiness to everything around, shone on us then and changed us into something which men dig out of the ground to keep you warm in winter.

To-day your great nation of which you are justly so proud would amount to scarcely anything if it were not for me, though I am dirty and black. The other day I heard a boy singing:

"Down in the dark mine,
Underneath the ground,
Where no gleam of sunshine
Ever can be found;
Digging dusty diamonds
All season round;
Down in the coal mine,
Underneath the ground."

I felt sorry for that boy, but he seemed to be happy; I felt sorry for him because it must be very dreary for him in the dark mine all day long. I know I enjoyed

being a fern tree out in the sunshine more than I do my present house.

NOTE.—Talk more about coal, coal mine, etc.

* * *

One day in June I was traveling thro' one of the Southern States and found a plant unlike anything we see in the North. It grew from two to four feet high and had green leaves and yellowish flowers. And two months later I saw the same fields again and found that these flowers had grown into pods and the pods were filled with something white. I examined a pod which had burst open and found that this white material was filled with tiny black seeds. I saw the pickers with baskets hanging on their shoulders.

You know there are a great many colored people in the South. They do a great deal of the work in these great snowball fields. For many years the little black seeds had to be picked out by hand. In 1793 a man named Eli Whitney invented a machine which would pick out these seeds and now the cloth sells as low as five cents a yard. Before this the most expensive dress that the Queen of England possessed was a calico one. Some of the seeds are long and some short, hence have different names.

The United States raises more of this material than any other country. There are none of you but have among your wardrobe garments which are the products of the ——— plant.

* * *

One hot day Eddie was lying in the shade of the old maple tree that grew in their yard. He had been reading fairy tales and had scarcely closed his book when he heard a voice say, Little boy, "I used to clothe an animal instead of a boy." My home was on a hillside and a very merry life I led. To be sure I did not see as many sights as I now do, but I enjoyed the country air more than I do the city.

We spent all the day in the green fields and at night lay on the grass. We long led this quiet life till one day a man and his dog drove the animal that I was on into a stream of water which was close by. I could not think what they were going to do with me, they rubbed and scoured me so much. But when it was over I looked so clean and white that I was quite proud of my beauty, and I thought I was now to return and frisk in the meadow as I had done before. But, alas! instead of setting the poor frightened creature at liberty he took out a

large pair of shears. Only think of its fright. But the man held it down and began cutting me off close to the skin. Although the shears could not hurt me, because I could not feel, yet I was much frightened. I could not bear the thought of being parted from my dear friend, for we had grown up together ever since he was a baby. After I was taken off I was packed in a bag with a great many other fleeces and sent to some mills in a place called Lowell, where there were many little strange things that were forever twisting and turning around. These seized hold of us and pulled us and twisted us about in such a wonderful manner that we were all drawn out into threads, so unlike we were that I hardly knew myself.

But it was still worse when sometime afterward they plunged me into a large kettle of dirty looking water. When I was taken out instead of being white I was of a bright blue color and looked very beautiful. After this I was sent to a cloth mill, where my threads were stretched in a machine called a loom, and I was woven into a piece of cloth. I was then folded up and placed on a shelf in a tailor's shop, and I remember that one day you and father came into the store and your father said that you wanted a coat; and do you remember the kind of goods that the tailor said I was?

Eddie had been very much interested in the story of the wool when suddenly he heard another voice say, "I used to live under the ground, not bright and shining as you now see me, but mixed with dirt and rubbish. I cannot tell how long I was there, for it was always dark, and I could not tell day from night nor count weeks and years. I was so deep in the earth that I could not hear the church bell strike. But it was not dismal for me, for I could neither feel nor think. Well, after having lain there for ages, perhaps, all at once there was an opening made in the ground and men came down and dug me up. They talked about some fine copper. 'I am glad we have reached it at last,' said one of them; 'it will repay us for all our labor.' They then put me into a basket and I was taken up above ground. After that I was put into a fiery furnace. I was not burned to ashes as you might suppose, because metals do not burn, but I was melted. The earth and the rubbish would not melt, so I was kept apart from them. I was then left to cool and become solid again. Men then came with hammers and beat me till I was quite flat. Every time they struck me I cried out as loudly as I could, but they went on all the same. After I had been beaten into a flat sheet I, with all my brothers here, was cut into little bits and placed in a strange kind of thing called a lathe. The man held me there while he turned

a wheel with his foot so fast that it would have made me dizzy had I had a head. But tho' I had no head I soon found that I was to have an eye, and then I was put on a sheet of thick, white paper. When you bought your coat you chose me and my companions for———."

* * *

One day I found a piece of meat that had been thrown away and on it I noticed some eggs; I watched these eggs for a time and found that they hatched into little white grubs, which did nothing but eat until they were the size of the insect which laid the eggs. I will tell you about just one of them. Its skin became hard and then it did not eat for several days, but all the time inside the hard skin wings were growing, and as soon as the perfect insect was ready it split the old dried skin in front and came out with very stunted wings which, in a few minutes, while the new skin was becoming dry, quickly grew until after a little flapping and fanning the insect stood ready to be described, for you children to guess his name. I am going to tell you only the wonderful things about this little fellow, because if I am very plain you will soon guess his name. I found one of his ancestors last fall on the ceiling where he had

died, and I discovered that each of his feet was composed of a pair of pads with a pair of hooks above them, and the pads clothed with a number of very fine, short hairs. Each pad was hollow, with a little tube projecting into it. Behind the tube was a bag connected with it. When this insect was alive, this bag was filled with a very clear, transparent gum. This gum came from the bag into the tube when the insect walked and thence it went into the little hairs, which were also hollow. Thus, at every step, the insect glued itself to the surface, but when it lifted its feet it took care to draw them up in a slanting direction, just as we would remove a moist postage stamp. But this poor fellow had become sick and was too weak to pull his feet up any more, and so he was glued to the ceiling. But now let me tell you more about the live insect whose life I intend to watch. I find that it can smell and hear and taste, and that it can see more according to its size than any animal. To see as well as it we should require two more pair of eyes, in the side and at the back of the head. This insect has wings, too, which we have not, and has three pair of legs instead of one, and it has a mouth that would bewilder any dentist. I might tell you more about this common curiosity, but I think I have said enough to show you that the work of God is just as perfect in the

tiniest thing that creeps, as in the great worlds which whirl thro' space.

Now, you may think that I have described something which you have never seen. Oh, yes! you have seen hundreds of them and wished a good many times that there were none to be seen, or to trouble you, when you wanted to read or sleep. But nothing in this world is without its use.

Our pretty birds would often go hungry were it not for these tiny creatures. Long ago, fishermen found out that fish could be coaxed by a sight of them on the water. The toad, too, can make a good meal on a small family of the winged creatures, whose name you now have a chance to guess.

* * *

Little Jack Wheeler felt very grand because he was going to Boston all alone. What did it matter if auntie did see him safely into the car at Salem, or that papa would be at the depot to meet him at Boston? Everything was interesting now that he was traveling all by himself. He took a bright penny out of his pocket-book to buy the "*Record*," just as papa always did. Then he put the ticket underneath the steel rod of the seat in front of him, pulled off his hat and ran his fingers

through his wavy ringlets, a perfect copy of the young man opposite him. At the next station a queer looking man with a big wicker basket took the seat directly in front of Jack. Jack climbed upon the seat and smiled at the new comer cordially. The queer looking man returned the smile and then he opened the lid of the basket cautiously. "Polly wants to come out," said a voice. "Poor Polly! Polly wants to see the show." Jack looked around in astonishment. "Is it a parrot?" he asked excitedly. "Oh, can't he come out one minute, if you please?" "Couldn't," said the man solemnly. He'd never come back again." "I'm cold," said Polly, "Poor Polly! Polly wants a cracker." "Keep still," said the man, giving the basket a shake. "Keep quiet yourself," answered Polly loudly. "I'm dying! Poor, Poor Poll," wailed the parrot. "Oh, do please, Mr. Man," urged Jack politely,"do please let me just peep into the basket!" He climbed down from his seat and stood beside the man. "I have a feather parrot at home," said Jack quickly, "and I admire him, only he's a stuffed one, and so I admire yours much more, you know." "I think parrots would like me," continued Jack with charming frankness, "cause most animals do." "So I would," answered the parrot. "Let me out! Let me out! I want to fly."

Everybody in the car turned around, stared and laughed and talked about Jack and the man and the wicker basket with the parrot. "If I only had a cracker," said Jack, as he hunted in his pocket. "Do you 'spose he'd eat a butter scotch?" he asked eagerly as he pulled out a very wooly-coated one. It had stuck fast in his pocket, and a fuzzy covering was the consequence. "No," answered the parrot, "my tooth aches." "Oh," exclaimed Jack. "I'm so sorry, I'll ———" But all the passengers were getting up and the cars had stopped, and the conductor called Boston.

The queer man smiled again as he opened the basket very wide. There was nothing but an empty basket, and the man shut the lid down with a snap.

"It's the first of April, sonny, and I'm Prof. T," said he.

Poor little Jack was so mystified that he stood stock still in the middle of the car, and there papa found him. And papa explained the mystery. Can you?

—*Selected.*

* * *

Last spring was a very busy time in our little village, and a great many people were looking for houses to rent. Among others came a gay young

bachelor, who said he wanted a house large enough for a family, but not a bit too large. Some one asked him why he did not bring his wife with him, and he said he had no wife and was not going to have one until he had a place to keep her.

We told him that we had no house to rent, but that he might choose a site on which to build.

The land belonged to the Miflin children, and they said that they would rent it for a song a day, because, you must know, Mr. Billy was a fine singer.

He spent a day in examining the place and then concluded to accept it at the owner's terms. He said that he wanted to build a house with a door just large enough for him to go through, and that the great trouble with tenements is, these days, that the doors are so large you never can tell who will be coming in.

When he had finished his house he put in some furniture—not very expensive furniture, either. It was only pine, and was upholstered with dry grass, but it suited Mr. Billy. He spent some time in arranging it, and then went out to advertise for a wife.

How do you suppose he did it? He went way up in the top of an apple tree, where he had a good view of the country round, and began to sing. He first gave one sweet song as payment for his rent, and then went

on to tell of himself and his fortunes. All day he sat and sang without a sign of success, but he was not discouraged.

"Of course," he said to himself, cheerfully, at night, "one couldn't expect such good luck the first day."

So the next morning he re-arranged his furniture, and went at his trilling again.

"Really," he exclaimed, as the second day passed and never a sign of a young lady, "this is strange; but after all it isn't so bad. This apple tree is a nice place to sit in the breeze with the bees humming around. I don't think I'd mind singing a week." At the end of the week, however, he couldn't understand where the people kept themselves. He supposed they must be taking a vacation down by the river or up on the hills, but he did think the first of June was time for them to return to their old haunts. But still he sang as gaily as ever. "Oh, where art thou, my Jenny?" and kept as light a heart as he could.

The next morning he was rewarded by seeing little Miss Jenny appear, so he politely invited her down to see his humble dwelling, and was as attentive as could be. She, however, was hard to please. Said his house was small and stuffy, and that she couldn't think of

liking a man who put on so many airs, and directly went away. The Miflin children, who had been watching all this, were very sorry for their little friend, but he said it was foolish to care about such a bold faced jig, and tuned up again. Another week of throat music and another cousin came along.

"Patient waiters are no losers," warbled Billy, as Miss Jenny — quiet and modest — said, shyly, that she thought the cottage was very cozy and she would like to stay. Then what a jubilee overflowed from the brave little fellow's heart. It did not matter to him that his bride gently but decidedly removed the furniture and brought other to suit herself. He eagerly sought for more, but she promptly threw this, too, on the ground, as if to say, "What do men know about house-keeping?" So he finally let her do it her own way, and he sat near by and sang as if his heart were bursting with joy.

This pleased himself and his wife, and the Miflin children; and, as even the neighbors approved, it was called a very happy match. One thing only did Dorothy Miflin criticise. She thought they ought to have more windows and doors in their dwelling and ought not to block up the door so. However, as Jenny paid no more regard to her than she did to her husband, nothing could be done about it.

Soon there was a family of children to care for, and Billy spent most of his time, when he was not feeding the babies, in scolding the yellow cat, Cæsar. Cæsar took a more than common and neighborly interest in the family. He would climb upon the roof and lie there by the hour, stretching out a long arm toward the house, unmindful of the threats and persuasions of Miss Dorothy.

It has been noticed that the smaller the house the more children there are in it. It was a great day when this family came out. Little Dorothy and brother Ben and Cæesar had spent much time wondering how many babies there were, and, as the door was so small that only one could stick out a head at a time, there was no means of knowing. It had been noticed that the father and mother had not been to feed the babies that morning. The biggest brother had been looking out of the door for some time waiting for his breakfast, and thus shutting in all the other brothers and sisters who were just as hungry as he was. All at once the children inside gave the big brother a push from behind, and the greedy fellow found himself on the piazza. But there was another one in his place. All the morning what an anxious time it was! One after another was pushed out, and when the sixth one made his appear-

ance, the wonder of the Miflin children knew no bounds. "They must have been squeezed awfully," said Dorothy. "Pooh!" replied papa, "that's nothing to what we could do if we tried." Does anyone know what Billy and Jenny's last name was?

—*Adapted.*

⁂

QUEER NEIGHBORS.

I was sitting under a tree on a warm afternoon watching for Tommy to come home from school. Tommy is a dear little fellow, and I like to meet him at the gate when school is out. It was not yet four o'clock so I looked about for something to help pass the time, and what should I see but Mr. W—— just coming in from a hunt. Now, if you should look out of your window some fine day and see your next neighbor walking briskly along with a big, fat grizzly bear tucked under one arm, I think you would be surprised. Even if grizzly bears were as common as red squirrels you would not expect a man to be strong enough to carry one in that way. Mr. W——'s game was not a grizzly bear, but it was two or three times as large as he was, and it did look odd to see him hurry along just as if it were nothing at all. Now, what kind of game do you suppose it was? It was neither brown, black,

white, gray, striped nor spotted. It did not have fur nor feathers, down, hair nor wool. It could not fly, walk, run, jump nor swim. But Mr. W—— seemed to prize it very highly, and I thought to myself that it ought to keep his whole family in meat for a long time. I do not know Mr. W——. They seem to be strange people. I have heard that he carries concealed weapons, and you know that is a bad thing to do and is against the law. Mr. W—— is very neat and trim in his dress, but I fear he is a scamp for all that. It seems strange that with all his fine airs he should bring up his family under ground. In the West such dwellings are called dug-outs, and you may be sure that rich and stylish people do not live in them. Even poor folks will not put up with them except while the country is very new. But Mr. W——, who really seemed quite a dandy in his glossy hunting suit, laid down his game in full view, and began to open the passage into his dug-out. He did not even have a door, nor so much as an old blanket for a screen, but had it blocked up with chunks of earth, each one as big as his head. When I saw that, I said to myself, "I am glad I am not Mrs. W——and the children."

But, as I told you, I do not know the family very well. Perhaps they like this kind of a door. When

Mr. W—— had pulled out these chunks of earth, he brought out his game and went downstairs backwards, dragging it after him.

He was gone some little time, and I wondered if he was salting it down for future use. I wished I might follow and see how his house looked inside, but I could not do it, and besides it would have been very rude indeed. At last he came upstairs and began to close the door-way. He picked up chunks of earth and fitted them in very nicely. If he found one that did not make a smooth joint, he carried it off some distance, so that there would be no pile of earth to mark the place of his house. "Who would have thought," said I to myself, "that these odd people could live almost next door without our ever seeing their dug-out?"

And I looked down the street for Tommy. I wanted to show him the queer little house. Just at that moment away flew Mr. W—— right over my head, and, though I searched right and left, I could not find the funny little dug-out where he had so cunningly hid his great, green worm.

—*Youth's Companion.*

I want to tell you to-day of a food which you could not do without,—something which you eat every day, yet I wonder if you know how it grows. This food is obtained from a plant, but not from a plant that grows in our garden, but "away down south in the land of cotton."

But the food is not the stem of the plant, nor the leaf, nor the fruit, bnt it is in the juice of the stem. So you see that different plants have different uses. Some are grown for the fruit, some for their leaves, some to give shade, some for fragrance, and some simply for beauty. This plant grows very tall, 12 or 15 feet. The stem seems to be jointed. From these joints spring out long, narrow leaves. The stem is called a cane. The cane is hard without, but inside it is soft and spongy, and full of sweet juice.

Imagine a whole field of canes, and at the top of each a beautiful bouquet of flowers. But these are not walking canes, neither do they grow for beauty alone, but when they are ripe they are tied in bundles and passed through rollers that squeeze the juice out of them. Then the juice is boiled until it becomes thick.

Now we have something that looks like molasses, but we do not care for the molasses, so it is put into barrels, which have holes in them for the molasses to

drain off. A brown substance is left, which we use for some purposes, but to make it white and pure it must be boiled again. But this food is in more things than these canes. It is in all fruit. In beets especially it is very abundant. It is something which nearly all boys and girls, particularly if they have a "sweet tooth," like too well, for very often it makes them sick; but surely they would not be strong and healthy without a little of it in their food.

* * *

THE BABY QUEEN.

She was born in a palace swarming with busy folks, or, at least, most of them were busy. I'm sorry to say, though, that a few were very lazy, indeed, and made the others do all the work. She was such a queer little baby, lying very still in her fuzzy, white dress. Her mother was altogether too busy to take care of her and the other babies, for, you see, she had a great many tiny sisters and brothers. If it hadn't been for many kind nurses, I am afraid they would never have grown up at all. But the nurses watched over them very tenderly and carefully, and fed them on bread and milk all day long.

They never had to wait for something to eat. The

nurses fed them "between meals," and at all times, and so they grew ever so much faster than some babies do. Why, some of them doubled in size in only half a day! So you see their bread and milk agreed with them very nicely indeed. I think the nurses must have loved this ONE special baby more than the rest. Anyway, they soon began to give her better food than the other babies. She had beautiful, rich, "royal jelly" to eat, while they had only "bread" mixed with a tiny drop of honey. After all, the most wonderful thing about this queer little queen was what made her a queen. It was the royal food she ate. It wasn't because she was first heir to the throne, but just because she had "royal jelly" for dinner and the other babies didn't. Whoever heard of any other queen who owed her crown to her dinner? She had a tiny room all to herself—and so did most of the babies for that matter. It was a cozy little room with six walls, and the door was always open till the queen baby was about nine days old. Then the nurses after they had given her a good, big meal of "royal jelly," shut the door tight and locked it. For twelve long days the baby lived all alone in her little locked-up room. Nobody came to see her, or took any notice of her.

At first she seemed to enjoy being alone, and never

thought of wondering why the nurses didn't bring her some dinner. To tell the truth, she was very busy growing and putting on a suit of beautiful new clothes. As the door was kept locked so tight, nobody could look in to see how the suit was made, or how the wee baby put it on all by herself. After the dress was donned, the queer baby began to turn slowly round and round, and cut a small hole in her door with her strong, little "teeth," — for she had cut all her teeth by that time. Presently the door flew open, and the little queen came out and looked around. I wonder what she thought of the rows of six-walled rooms; the crowds of busy workers bustling about, bringing in new supplies of food and piling them into the rooms; and the lazy loungers, here and there doing nothing, nothing at all. It must have surprised her, but she was a very quiet little lady and only called out something which sounded like "zeep, zeep, zeep." After that she went back into her own little room to rest, but presently walked boldly out. She was so hungry she walked around in the food rooms and helped herself. Nobody objected, for they all knew it was the new queen, and, of course, she could do as she wished.

From that time she was perfectly at home in the busy palace, and was generally quiet and good, but oh

dear! she had one great fault. She was very jealous of the other young queens, and, sad to tell, I'm afraid she had a fight with them and drove them all away.

Haven't you guessed who the little queen is by this time?

—*Youth's Companion.*

* * *

Into a lonely hovel walked a man one day, who was so tired and discouraged that he at once threw himself on a pallet bed. He supposed that no one lived in the little shanty, but after he had been there for some time he began to look around, and discovered that there was another person in the house. But as no one spoke, he concluded that he would keep still and find out, if possible, the occupation of the inmates of this lowly hovel. He found, after watching a few minutes, that in this humble dwelling there was being manufactured beautiful silver lace work of gold and silver threads. The spinner would fasten the thread from one rafter to another with gum. It seemed a very dirty place for such fine work to be going on, but it was done as neatly and with as much care as though it had been in a mansion. The lady of the house, too, took good

care of her little ones, and they were early taught how to make this same kind of lace.

The stranger arose presently, unnoticed, and as all were so intent upon their work, he said nothing but went out into the garden and there he found this same kind of lace work hanging on the bushes. But this was prettier than that in the house, for it was covered with jewels, and, as the sun shone upon it, it was simply beautiful. The man by this time was very much interested, and determined to find out, if possible, more about this wonderful family.

He found, upon investigation, that they have relatives in Bermuda, who dress in beautiful black and yellow suits. These friends weave bright, yellow silk, and fasten it on the top branches of trees on either side of a road or pathway. But they are rather treacherous persons to know, for they do not hesitate, after inviting a party to walk into their parlors, to snap off their heads and make a meal of the poor unfortunates. But they have other relations who are just as industrious, and even more ingenious, than those who reside in Bermuda. These relatives are all masons. Their houses are all built in the ground in circular shape. The inside is lined with silk, and no drawing room in the land is so beautifully plastered and papered. The

door of the house, though, is the most wonderful. It is very thick, and is made of layers of earth and silk, with a silk hinge, which is very elastic and springy, so that as soon as the door is opened it flies shut. These masons are very bashful creatures, and do not let anyone find their home if they can help it. So they glue moss and earth on the outside of the door to make it look just like the ground around it. They have still other relations, who live under the water. They have a way of building their houses with the door downward, so that the air cannot escape.

But I have no more time to talk about this family. I am sure you know now that I mean the ———.

⁂

Humpty Dumpty has country cousins,
Who come to the city in Spring by dozens;
They make such a brilliant show in town,
You'd think that a rainbow had tumbled down.
Blue and yellow and pink and green,
The gayest gowns that ever were seen;
Purple and gold, and oh! such style,
They are all the rage for a little while.
But their visit is short, for no one stays,
After the Easter holidays.

—*Youth's Companion.*

One evening as the children gathered around grandma's chair, and begged for a story "'bout when you was little, gran'ma," she said: "Something that we had for supper to-night, children, made me think of the time when a peddler used to come by our house once a month, bringing buttons and thread, and such little things, to sell. He used to carry seeds and cuttings of plants from one farmer's wife to the next, and they liked to see him come. He could tell all the news, too, from up the road and down. One spring morning he came, and, after mother had bought all she needed from his big red wagon, and he had fed his horses, and was sitting by the kitchen fire waiting for his dinner, he began fumbling about in his big pockets in search of something. Finally, he drew out a very small package and handed it to mother. 'I've brought you some "love apple" seeds,' he said. 'I got them in the city, and I gave my sister half and saved half for you.' 'Thank you kindly,' mother said, as she looked at the little yellow seeds, "I'm right glad to get them. What kind of a plant is the 'love apple'?" 'Well,' said the peddler, 'the man who gave me the seeds had his plants last year in a sunny fence corner. The flowers are small, but the fruit is quite large, and is a bright red color, and looks very pretty among the dark green

leaves. You can't eat the fruit, though, it's poisonous. It's something new. The man who gave me the seeds got them from the captain of a ship from South America. They grow wild there.' So mother planted her 'love apple' seeds in a warm corner, and they grew, and the little yellow blossoms came, and after them the pretty red fruit. We children would go and look at it, and talk about it, and wonder if it would harm us if we just tasted it. One day mother heard us talking about it, and she called us away, and told us that if we could not be satisfied to look at the pretty fruit without wanting to eat it, she would have to pull up her 'love apple' vines and throw them away. We knew she would hate to do that, for no one else about had them, and she was very proud of them. So we kept away from that corner, and the vine grew and blossomed, and the red showed in new places every day. The birds didn't seem at all afraid of the poisonous fruit and ate all they wanted of it. One day in the early fall my uncle came to make us a visit. When he went out in the garden he stopped in surprise. 'Why Mary! what fine vines you have!' he said to mother. 'Where did you get them?' "We call them 'love apples,'" mother said, and then she told him how the peddler brought the fruit seeds. But when my uncle found that we were afraid to eat

them he had a hearty laugh at us, and then he showed mother how to get some ready for supper. And now you children may tell me the other name for the 'love apple.'"

—*Adapted.*

⁂

A SLEEPY FAMILY.

In a tiny palace,
  Quite too small for you,
A thousand little creatures
  Doze the winter through.
When the ripe nuts patter,
  Off to bed they creep,
Huddled close together,
  Till the snow drops peep.
Lazy, did you call them?
  No, I've never seen
Busier little workers,
  Tho' their mother is a queen.
But she always taught them
  That they must not shirk,
And the livelong summer
  They were hard at work.
Through the fields of clover,

Through the lonely wood,
They were carrying honey,
Like Red Riding Hood.
So you must not blame them,
Tired little things,
If each wee small worker
Folds at last its wings.
Warm and snugly nestled,
In their sweet, sweet home,
In their cozy little house,
Till the snow drops come.

* * *

Who is this? What a strange suit! A dress of black and white, but strangely turned about. His coat is buttoned on hind side before, and his white vest shows on his back. A funny suit, indeed. Who dares to dress in such an odd way? Have you seen him? He comes North the last of May, and in June he and his wife set up house-keeping in farmer Brown's meadow. Do you know her? She dresses very plainly —in dark brown, with a yellowish vest. He is a very jolly singer. I think he is happier here than in the South. Down there he dressed just like his wife, and

he did not sing the jolly song we hear. He said chink! chink! just like his mate.

One day last June I took a walk in farmer Brown's meadow. I wish you had been there. The birds had gone to house-keeping, and they were so afraid I would find out where. Poor little birdies! I was only looking for a painted cup for a bright June bouquet. Papa bird flew over my head and scolded me as hard as he could, and mamma bird flew from one weed to another, and watched me very closely. I did not try to find the nest. I knew I could not if I should look all the morning. But it was there. People who have seen this bird's nest say that it is made of dry grass and tiny roots, and lined with softer pieces of grass. It is loosely put together, and is not very deep. In the nest are four or five little eggs. Sometimes they are a light grayish blue color, and sometimes they are a brownish clay color, with dark spots. When the eggs are hatched the father and mother take good care of the little ones for a while, feeding them on grass-hoppers and bugs, which the farmer likes to have killed. Soon after they leave the nest they will have to take care of themselves. The little birds look like the mother, and in the summer the father bird will leave off his bright coat and put on a plain dress, too. In September, they will leave us,

and go to the Southland, where they are called rice birds or reed birds. Do you know what we call them here?

—*American Teacher.*

* * *

A PRETTY GOWN.

All the shop windows in town are full
Of silk and cotton and gingham and wool,
But none of them shows a gown so gay,
As the one Mrs. Humming is wearing to-day.

'Tis the very same fashion her grand-mother wore,
And hasn't a seam or pucker or gore:
The sun doesn't fade it, the rain doesn't spot,
And it's just the thing whether chilly or hot.
'Tis a perfect fit, and it won't wear out,
But will last her as long as she lives, no doubt.

—*Anna M. Pratt.*

* * *

The July sun glared down on the mesa, and warmed even the mountain water, until it felt pleasant to Kitty's bare feet, as she splashed along in the irrigating ditch.

From the melting snow fields, a long way above

came that mountain water. Kitty could see the long ditch bringing it down, winding through the summer greenery on the mountain side, and she looked at it nearly all the time, for grandpa had gone up to fix the head-gate, and she was watching for him.

But the oak brush was thick and high, and Kitty did not see him at all until some one said right close to her, "Kitty, pussy! Kitty, pussy!" and there stood grandpa, behind a big patch of oak brush! His rifle was on his shoulder, and he was leading his horse. A black-tail deer was thrown across his saddle, and thrown over the deer was the tawny hide of a wild animal; for grandpa was a pioneer, and had been a mighty hunter in his day. "Here is a rug for your feet when you hop out of bed on cold mornings," grandpa said, as Kitty ran up; "and, little Miss Kitty, here's another kitty for you—a little wild puss in snow shoes." Now Kitty had heard of "puss in boots," but of "puss in snow shoes," never. Her arms, then, were open wide as grandpa put in them a little animal with snow shoes on. The little thing was about as long as grandpa's hand. His ears were silken tufted; he had only a short bob of a tail, and sure enough, on his feet were snow shoes—not like the long board ones that in winter grandpa kicked off his feet at the cabin door, but nice,

soft, furry ones in which he could trip as lightly over the soft deep snows of the range, as any puss on parlor carpet. The Snowy Range was his home, and his spreading, clumsy looking feet were made for treading on a snowy carpet. Kitty named him "Link," and soon no house cat could be tamer. No house cat, either, ever showed more affection than Link did for Kitty.

He followed her everywhere, and was always pleased and purring at her presence — with a purr, Kitty said, "bigger than a two cat's purr." It is well that he nearly always purred, for sometimes when he lost Kitty, he would give a cry, between a shriek and a squall, that made Kitty's hands go up to her ears. Link's kitten blue eyes soon changed into big yellow ones, he grew so fast; but fast as his body grew, his snow shoes grew even faster, so that he was a queer looking pet, as he shambled about after Kitty, with his stump of a tail going. Awkward as Link looked, he could spring, and so one day the chickens suffered.

Then Link had to be chained up. Sometimes at night, he would break away and climb over the roof and down to Kitty's little window. Then he would scratch and squall until Kitty came. Then, hearing Link purr, you would think Kitty held a whole family of

cats in her arms. Who was this friend that belonged to the cat family, yet was not a cat?

—*Youth's Companion.*

* * *

"I am going to have something new next week," said Aunt May, the day after Christmas. "A new dress?" questioned Daisy. "A new book?" asked Fred. "A new guitar?" guessed Hattie. "You haven't come within a mile of it," said Auntie. "It's a great deal more important than any of those things. You all know about it, too. Just think a minute." So they all pulled their thinking caps clear down to their eyes, as Daisy said, and pretty soon Fred asked, "Will we have it, too, auntie?" "Yes," she said, "We'll all have it." "Will Mr. Hill's folks have it?" And Fred's eyes began to twinkle. "Yes," said auntie, "Everybody will have it." Then the eyes of Daisy and Hattie began to twinkle, too. And they all guessed what it was. Can you?

—*Adapted.*

* * *

Why does school not keep on November 31st?

Why does a cow never lose her upper teeth?

Pam and Jake were hunting in the woods for "Jack in the pulpit" and "noble lion wort", to put in the little garden beds which the school children had made by the school house door. They had planted sweet peas and bachelor buttons and prince's feather; and Aunt Hulda had given Pam a geranium and Jake a French pink. But the little gardeners were not satisfied. The beds were not full enough. So all the children planned to hunt in the woods for something to set out. It was the last day of May, and very hot, and Pam and Jake after digging their roots and gathering great bunches of blue violets, thought they would take a run to the ice cave, a deep place, away in among the rocks under Poplar Hill. The ice and snow in there did not thaw away until late in the summer. They had to creep through a small hole to get in, and it wasn't very light inside, either. Jake said that foxes sometimes dined in there, and it made Pam "creepy" to crawl in, so she always coaxed Jake to go first. Just as Jake had taken off his broad brimmed hat to shout into the hole—"to scare out anything there"—he said something wriggled among the low bushes that partly covered the mouth of the cave. Pam and Jake had just hid behind a rock, when out popped an animal, 15 or 18 inches long, blackish above

and chestnut red below, soft hair and bushy tail. She had something in her mouth, and she scudded off as fast as her short legs could go. She had been so busy that she had not discovered Jake and Pam in their hiding place. "Oh, it was a little one! I saw him! She had him right by the neck!" whispered Jake. "Carrying him just like old Topsy carries her kittens!" whispered back Pam. "She's got a hole in there among the rocks, and she's moving 'em somewhere." "Let's watch her," said Pam. So they kept behind the rock and waited. Before long the little creature scurried back, darted into the hole, and came out with another baby. She held her head high, but the little one's hind legs dangled on the ground. Pam and Jake held their hands over their mouths to keep from laughing out loud. Then they got up still, and followed her. Didn't she scamper along for fear something would seize her on the road — over the knolls, among the sweet fern, under the rick fence, and into the new clover lot! Ah! she has dug a new house under a big rock in the clover field, so as to be handy for breakfast! This little animal was a wise house-keeper. She had planned it all out this way, I suspect. The cave was all well enough in winter, so long as she was all rolled up in a great gray ball, and stiff as a stump with the cold, but it was

no place for the babies to grow and get fat, for where was there anything to eat? Most likely, on one of her foraging trips she had discovered this springing clover field, and resolved to move into it. But, oh dear! there was the house to build first. So she had to set right about it, working with all her might. And that, with the moving, was a hard task, indeed, for she could carry only one baby at a time. Pam and Jake watched her bring three more babies; then she came out on the door step, sat up, and looked all about to see if she had been observed. Jake snickered, Pam giggled, and away darted the mother down into her house, with a chicker of alarm.

—*Adapted.*

* * *

One Saturday afternoon, Charlie's cousin Edith came to see him. By and by, Eric and his sister Cora came to play with them. "Uncle Ned is at home," said Charlie, "Let us ask him to tell us a story. He always tells nice ones, because they are true." Uncle Ned said he was willing, and in a few moments the play room was very still, while four eager children waited for him to begin.

"Well," said Uncle Eric, "I'll tell you about a family by the name of Brown. There was papa and

mamma Brown, and four children. Mary Brown had blue eyes and yellow hair. Bertha Brown had brown eyes and brown hair. Josephine, had black eyes and black hair. Thomas, had gray eyes and red hair. These children did not look much alike, you see, yet they had the same last name and belonged to the same family. That was strange, wasn't it?" asked Uncle Ned. "Why, no sir. Cora and I do not look alike but we are brother and sister," said Eric.

"Well," said Uncle Ned, "King of the Mines, who called to see you last week, has a large family, and I shall introduce you to some of his children who do not look much alike. Here is the one of the family that has yellow hair. This member is often called upon to cure sore throat. It is a solid, brittle, yellow substance, without taste or smell, and will not dissolve in water. When heated it forms a thin, yellow liquid, and heated to the boiling point it forms a yellow vapor. This vapor condenses into a fine yellow powder. When heated in the air it takes fire, burning with a blue flame. It is used in making matches and gun powder, and it is also used in the destruction of insects and germs of disease."

NOTE.—Explain that this substance is also found mixed with other metals as well as iron, and sometimes

alone. It exists, too, in some vegetables, and in the juices of some plants.

Uncle Eric then introduced another one of this family. This member had a strange way of attracting everything to it, especially his iron and steel friends. For this reason, what is his name?

NOTE.—Explain that the members with brown hair, and red hair, are red and brown haematite, used in making paint, and that mixed together they make a pretty blue.

* * *

What it was started it, who can tell?
But out of a cloud's black cave,
It rushed with a furious shout, pell mell,
Like the charge of an army brave.

It beat at the casement that trembled sore,
It scampered the grasses through;
It tangled the vines, and the reeds it tore;
And then! What did it do?

The vanes on the steeples it dizzy made,
Each spun like an airy top;
It twisted the boughs in the summer glade,
Till the leaflets were ready to drop.

It pommeled the pool till it fairly boiled;
The silly sheep scampered — Whew!
The crystal of wayside rills it roiled;
And then — what did it do?

It jostled the birds that flew about,
It tumbled the seas of grain;
It seemed to have blown the great sun out—
It shone not that day again.

Then, as quick as it came, it took its flight;
But tho' trees it had made to fall,
The frail, little, meek, little daisies white,
It had not harmed at all.

* * *

Children, let me describe myself to you and see if you can tell what I am. I am very heavy, and am of a blue-gray color. I am found sometimes in company with my friend, sulphur. But, as soon as I am taken from the ground, I am separated from my companion. The vapor which rises during this smelting process is so poisonous that it would destroy all the grass and shrubs in the neighborhood, and would kill any cattle in the vicinity. But they prevent this by having pipes, sometimes a mile in length, to conduct the smoke to

the outer air. I was just going to tell you of something that I am used for, but, if I should, you would guess my name immediately. But I will say just this much. I was very useful when the Declaration of Independence was declared, and also in the "Sixties." I am used to a great extent in the manufacture of dyes and colors. I am mixed with another metal and used in the manufacture of type, and mixed with tin, I am made into a cement to join metals. I am also used in medicine, but I must never be taken except under the advice of a physician, because I am poisonous.

You have met me many times, I'm sure. Can you not remember my name?

* * *

Tommy used to have a pet of which he was very fond. It was a graceful little animal, with a long body, and covered with short white fur, short legs and a diminutive tail. Its ears were long, and its eyes pink and very soft in expression. It used to live in the woods, but always chose a dry place, because it could not burrow in the moist ground. It used to sit up on its haunches, and with its ears erect, made a very cunning appearance. It did not need very much care, and was of very little expense. It fed upon vegetables, cabbage leaves,

celery tops, grass, clover, dandelion and other weeds.

But Tommy's papa did not like the pet so well, because it gnawed his young fruit trees. Of course it was natural for it to do that, because it had teeth that were made on purpose for that work. But papa thought he could not have his trees spoiled, so he said the pet must be killed. But he kept putting it off, and one day by accident one of the little creature's front teeth was broken off, and, as is often the case, the tooth opposite continued to grow, and reached such a size, finally, that the poor little thing could not eat, and died. What name do you suppose Tommy put on his tombstone?

* * *

I want to tell you to-day of an animal whose native home is the mountains. But it has been tamed and found to be useful to man for various purposes. This animal is covered with hair, has a short tail, high hoofs and long horns. It is easily tamed, yet is not very gentle. It rather enjoys a quarrel. As I said, the mountains are his native home, where animals of his kind can be raised on very scanty herbage—so poor that other animals will not eat it. The milk of these animals is very rich and nourishing, but the cheese and

butter made from it has a peculiar, strong flavor. The skins of these animals are dressed and made into fine leather, of which shoes, gloves, bags, etc., are made. The hair is made into ropes and wigs. The horns are made into knife handles, and the fat into candles. There are different breeds of these animals, but on nearly all grows a fine coat of hair or wool, which is made into garments, for which a large price is generally paid.

* * *

I know of another animal which is really useful to man; indeed, she is the most useful of all animals, I think, for nearly every part of her can be used for something, and yet she is one of the most awkward animals I have ever seen. The only pretty feature about her are her eyes. They are soft and mild, and really beautiful. Her feet, or hoofs, are divided so as to form two toes. Glue is made from the hoofs, and the hair is used in mixing mortar. The skin is used for making the soles of shoes, and the horns are made into knife handles, combs and other useful articles. The tails, even, are used for soup, and the fat is made into candles. But the most curious thing about this animal is the way she eats. If you watch her, you will see that she swallows her

food whole. Should you not think she would have indigestion? But, oh, no! Nature has provided her with four stomachs, so she uses the first one for a store-house only, and after she has been eating for some time, you will see her go off under the shade of a tree, and there contentedly stand and chew her food. Then she swallows it again; but it goes to a different stomach this time. It then passes to the remaining two stomachs, where the digestion is completed.

* * *

I.

There's a grim old king in an ermine robe,
  Who comes when the flowers are dead,
And he hides their graves 'neath a snowy shroud,
  And plants with a pitiless tread
His icy foot 'cross the singing brooks,
  And breathes on the leafless trees,
Till they bow them down to his icy rule
  And moan in the chilling breeze.

II.

He chokes the path on the mountain side,
  And piles his barriers high,
Till bush and brake and tangled hedge,
  All under his mantle lie.

He waves his hand and flashing shapes,
And crystal fingers grow;
Where once the song birds built their nests,
Now cold the north winds blow.

III.

He strews along the palace wall,
Carvings of feathery grace,
And by the lowliest cottage door,
He leaves his glittering trace;
He flecks the sky with cold gray clouds,
And shakes his whitened hair,
As if to say — this stern, old king —
Defy me — who shall dare?

* * *

I belong to the same family of animals that your pet cat does, that is, my form and general structure are the same. They say that when I walk proudly along, my head uplifted, and majesty and power shown in every motion, that I well deserve the title of King. I have brothers and sisters living in Africa and Asia. We are of a tawny or yellow color. The largest of us are eight feet long. We sleep in dens and caves, and prowl around at night in search of smaller animals,

which we eat. One of our favorite methods of obtaining food is to hide in the grass and reeds on the borders of a stream, and wait until deer, wild horses, etc., come to drink. We then spring upon them and carry them away to our dens. Some people think that we like to attack men, but we don't. We will run from men sooner than seize them. We hunt our prey by night more than by day. Since I have been caged, I hear the men say that they build fires oftentimes to frighten us. We always take good care of our young. We can make a terribly loud noise, which sounds very much like distant thunder.

The Bible tells of Daniel in the ——'s den.

* * *

Last fall a bed quilt was spread over mamma's flower beds, and, in the spring, when Jane and Belle took it off, they found that it had faded from beautiful yellow and red to a homely brown. But such wonderful things as the children found under the bed quilt. Pale, green, tulip leaves, bleached grass blades, folded buds of yellow and purple crocuses, and snow drops, like little white sleeves, green dotted and with scalloped edges. They all seemed glad to see the sunshine.

There were little insects crawling about under the warm leaves on top,—bugs and beetles—all going very slowly, as though they had the rheumatism.

A spider hurried out rather lively, and swung himself up over the dried honeysuckle vines, and a couple of caterpillars crawled on the gray fence rails. There was a bonfire in almost every neighbor's yard. Jane and Belle had one too. They burned up the flower's bed quilt. Such a big pile as it made. I could not begin to say how many matches Jane used, but the frolicsome spring wind sniffed every one out, so that the hired girl had to bring a shovelful of red coals from the kitchen fire before the quilt would catch. Then there was a great roaring of scarlet flames, and blue coils of smoke, all twisting and leaping upward.

"Oh! What'll the flowers do for a bed quilt when winter comes again?" said Belle.

"I guess the sugar maples'll weave 'em another one," Jane answered, wisely, as she glanced up at the red buds on the trees.

What had the trees to do with a bed quilt?

—*Adapted.*

My home is on the seacoast. I have many joints, and have ten feet. I can walk sideways or backwards as easily as forward. I am quite large, but not so large as some of my family. Some of my brothers are nearly a yard in length, while others are so small they could rest on the end of your thumb. I feed on worms and insects. People would like to catch me, for they value me as an article of food, but I hide within my shell when I see anyone coming. I can run quickly, and am an expert swimmer. I change my shell every year. One of my relatives is called a Hermit. He has a mean way of stealing his shell. When he outgrows his own shell he crawls out and hunts for a larger one, of which he takes possession as if he was the real owner. When he is frightened he draws entirely within his shell, and puts his claws against the opening to keep out intruders.

⁂

There is a bird who is very fond of playing tricks on his feathered companions. He will hide himself in the bushes, and will frighten small birds in the neighborhood by making a screeching sound like their great enemy, the hawk. This, of course, makes them scatter in great fear, and then he will try to laugh, and seem to

enjoy the joke immensely. He breaks the eggs in the nests of smaller birds, injures the little birds, and makes himself very disagreeable, doing all this mischief, it appears, just for the pleasure it gives him to see others suffer. Once in a while he gets the worst of it, for a number of the smaller birds, tired of his tricks, will combine to fight him, and punish him for his bad conduct. He is a great fighter himself, and there is usually a fierce battle before he is defeated. After such an attack he will behave himself properly for quite a time, and the little birds can enjoy themselves without being molested.

The boys, no doubt, know who this great joker is, so we will let the girls guess his name.

—*Selected.*

* * *

GUESSING CHARACTERS.

A very pretty school exercise is carried on under the above title in this way. Twelve children are stationed in the ante-room. One passes in, and taking position on the platform, says:

"I was one of the foremost officers in the war for the Union, though a small man. My men loved me and my horse, and should I name but one thing which

I did in the course of my brilliant career, every one in this room would at once know my name."

Here the child reciting strikes an attitude and declaims:

"But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good, broad highway leading down,"

The school will, of course, give the name of Sheridan, and the child leaves the platform, as another one comes from the ante-room and recites:

"I was a soldier, too, but I marched on foot while the general rode his famous black steed. I will tell you what I once did, however, for my fellow soldiers. There was no money to pay the poor fellows who were enduring so many hardships. So I went to the quarter master's tent and offered to furnish the money to pay my company, and the offer was gratefully accepted. But the people of America know me as an inventor of one of the most wonderful machines of the world, rather than as a soldier. I think that nearly everyone here has such a machine at home."

The answer is Elias Howe, of sewing machine fame, but, as the children at home will probably say the machines at their homes are Singers, etc., the teacher should explain that the Howe was the first, or

among the first, invented, and that many improvements have since been made, enabling men to take out patents in their own names.

Third Child. "If a man who suffered in the cause of right is a soldier, I was one in the highest sense, for I knew no voice but that of duty. I felt blame as keenly as any man, but neither praise nor blame made difference in my work. When my body was laid to rest in Mt. Auburn, a loved poet said of me:

'God said, "Break thou their yokes; undo
Their heavy burdens;" I ordain
A work to last my whole life thro',
A ministry of strife and pain.

'One language held his heart and lip,
Straight onward to his goal he trod,
And proved the highest statesmanship
Obedience to the voice of God.'

"Yes, under the cane of assassin in the Senate Chamber of the United States, when Massachusetts passed a sentence of censure upon me, or when men sang my praises, I obeyed the voice of conscience. And I succeeded in my work, and white and black bless the name of ———"

Child pauses until school gives the name of Charles Sumner, when he bows and gives way to the next.

A teacher will be able from this outline to take up any character wished, and the exercises may be varied greatly, being made comprehensible to children of ten or twelve years, or interesting to high school pupils. Authors, inventors, statesmen, famous women, actors, kings, queens, etc., may be taken up at different times, while the exercise is an admirable one for a French or German class, if French or German characters are taken and the descriptions given in one of these languages.

In arranging the exercise for a school exhibition or public speaking day, it would be well to have the school know the name of the person represented, and, after waiting a little to allow the audience to guess, have the name given by the school. When presented before the school only, if any name cannot be guessed, the teacher should encourage the pupils to look up the characters for themselves.

—*American Teacher.*

* * *

LITTLE H. O.

The first thing I remember was playing with my mother, sisters and friends in a pond. We had splendid times there, summer and winter.

One day a very nice little girl came down to the pond. She was very near to me, and I jumped up and kissed her hand. After a time, Mr. Sun grew very bright and warm, and called my mother, sisters and friends to go up into the sky. I became very, very lonely, and at last Mr. Sun called me up, too.

Up, up I went, until I saw my dear mother and sisters riding on a cloud. I jumped right on, and we were very happy in being together once more. Perhaps one reason why I enjoyed my journey to the cloud was, that no one could see me going, while I could see everyone and everything. One night our cloud carried us right past the moon, and we saw the man in the moon, and we saw the chimneys of the great cheese factories. When we passed the moon, little Miss Luna tossed us a moonstone, but we couldn't keep it, so we threw it down to Mother Earth.

We have been to Kindergarten, too. It was a much larger one than I ever saw in our city. Miss Saturn was the Kindergartner, and she was so gentle and kind. She had two of the lovliest large rings for her children to sit in. It seemed very cold and not very light near her. You know she is so far from the sun. One morning I awoke feeling so strange and cold. I

heard a strange noise, too. Can you guess what it was? Why, it was Jack Frost talking to the North Wind. He said, "Did you know Jennie had a nice new sled given her for Christmas, and she hasn't had a chance to use it yet? Then, too, the dear old trees look so cold and bare. They have kindly covered up the little flowers with their leaf blankets. Why can't we send them a nice, warm, white blanket? Let's blow on this cloud." So they blew and blew, and what do you think happened to us? Why we became very pretty snow flakes and began to go down, down. The kind east wind, and the sometimes rude north wind, blew us gently, first one way, then another, so we didn't get dizzy, but fell very gently. When we were about down, I began to look to see where I was going. I was delighted when I found myself on the window pane of a window in Jennie's house. Perhaps you think I wouldn't stay here long, nor be very useful, but I knew Jennie had been ill and was lonely, as she was obliged to stay in her room all day, and felt sure she would be glad to see me. So I said at noon as I saw her, "Good morning, Jennie." She said, "Good morning. Who are you? I am so delighted to see you." I told her who I was, and asked her if she remembered my kissing her hand in the pond once. I have been on a long journey since

then, and have seen many strange things. Then I told her of all that had happened, and she seemed to like best to hear of Miss Saturn's Kindergarten. I fancy that was because she, too, belonged to a nice Kindergarten herself.

—*Selected.*

* * *

A PRINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

I.

The shower had ceased, but the city street
  Was flooded still with drenching rain,
Tho' men and horses with hurrying feet
  Swept on their busy ways again.

II.

The gutter ran like a river deep,
  By the clean washed pavements fast it rushed,
As out of the spouts with a dash and a leap
  The singing, sparkling water gushed.

III.

A little kitten with ribbon blue
  Crossed over the way to the gutter's brink;
With many a wistful plaintive mew,
  She seemed at the edge to shudder and shrink.

IV.

And there she stood, while her piteous cries
Were all unheard by the heedless throng,
Looking across with such longing eyes;
But the torrent was all too swift and strong.

V.

Up the street, o'er the pavements wide,
Wandered our Prince from Newfoundland,
Stately and careless and dignified,
Gazing about him on either hand.

VI.

The sun shone out on his glossy coat,
And his beautiful eyes, soft and brown,
With quiet, observant glance took note
Of all that was passing him, up and down.

VII.

He heard the kitten that wailed and mewed,
Stopped to look and investigate,
The whole situation understood,
And went at once to the rescue straight.

VIII.

Calmly out into the street walked he,
Up to the poor, little, trembling waif,
Lifted her gently and carefully,
And carried her over the water safe.

IX.

And set her down on the longed for shore,
Licked her soft coat with a kind caress,
Left her and went on his way once more,
The picture of noble thoughtfulness.

X.

Oh, children dear, 'tis a lesson sweet;
If Prince Newfoundland so wise can be,
We should be gentle enough to treat
All creatures with kindness and courtesy.

XI.

For surely among us there is not one,
Who such an example could withstand;
Who could wish in goodness to be outdone
By a noble prince from Newfoundland.

—*Harper's Young People.*

Boys who live in the country usually have a number of pets. I once knew a boy who had for his favorite companion an animal about two and a half feet long, with a beautiful, chestnut brown, fur coat. It had web feet, and was a fine swimmer.

There was a pond on the farm, and my boy friend's pet lived in a hole by the pond. It caught fish and frogs and small birds. It was very playful, and would amuse itself by sliding down the sloping bank of the pond head foremost into the water, repeating this sport until exhausted. Its fur was made up of two layers one very soft and fine, the other a thin stiff layer of dark hairs. This fur was worth quite a good deal of money, but my boy would not part with his pet for all that.

* * *

One day Max went to sleep in school, — yes, right in school, and because he didn't look very well, the teacher did not wake him. Presently he heard a voice saying: "My home used to be in the salty ocean, and my house was built upon a rock, so that there was no danger of a wreck from the storms. I used to watch the great ships go by. I was an animal, you know, but not like the animals that you know about. I was full of holes, and I will tell you how I got my food. I drew water in through these holes, and as the water

went in, I took out of it all the little fine bits of food that were in the water. One day I saw a boat with two men in it. They had long handled harpoons, or spears, with hooked prongs. But the water was very rough, so that they could not see me, but I could see them. So these men dipped a smooth stone in oil, and threw it several yards in front of the boat. And the oil dropped from the stone onto the water and made it smooth. Then the man leaned over the side of the boat and watched, and when he saw me he hooked onto me with his harpoon, tore me loose, and pulled me up to the boat. Sometimes men dive for such animals as I. When I was brought to shore, I was buried in sand a few days. Then I was beaten with a flat stick, and washed and squeezed, until only my skeleton remained. Don't you think they used me rather mean? But you see I was of no use under the water, and my skeleton is used for many purposes. I am of great service to surgeons. I am used sometimes for stuffing mattresses and carriage cushions, and I don't know how you children could get along at school without me."

Just then the bell rang, and Max awoke, and told the teacher what he had dreamed; and the teacher told him that it was his ——— that had told him the pretty story.

I live at your house, but probably the boys in the family are not so well acquainted with me as are the girls. I live in a corner most of the time. Your mother, perhaps, knows me better than you do, for she says that I am her friend. A friend, you know, should try to be good and kind and helpful, and I am sure that I try to be all these things to your mother.

My dress is not made of cloth like yours. The material from which it is made grows in the fields, and is cultivated by the farmer after the manner of other crops. I think this material makes a pretty dress. You should notice the nice sewing on it. The stitches are long, but they are just right for such a garment.

I can do one thing that you cannot do. I can stand on my head for the longest time! Sometimes I stand on my head all day and all night, but it does not hurt me at all, and standing in this position serves to keep my dress from wrinkling.

I am peculiar in this, that I never work unless some one makes me, nor do I ever work alone. Please use me carefully, and do not throw me down when you are through using me, as I like to stand in my corner. If you use me well I will be your servant the longer. Boys sometimes work with me when they want to be

helpful to their mothers, and the girls should be able to guess, at once, that I am Mrs. ———.

* * *

Perhaps, boys, you have nad some rather hard work to do every day, for so long a time that you have come to dislike it. I felt that way about some work which I had to do regularly, but something happened one evening which caused me to think differently.

It was nearly bed time, and I was sitting by the fire almost asleep, when all at once I heard noises. I did not give much attention to them at first, but after a while I began to wonder who was talking, for I was all alone in the room. I looked all around but could see no one. Again I listened, and, at last, it appeared to me that the voices were coming from the stove.

I will tell you a little of what I heard. A voice seemed to be talking to its fellows, as they laid side by side in the stove. This is what it said:

"Did you hear what that little boy said as he carried us up the back stairs this evening? I have been angry about it ever since. To think of him saying such a thing! He said that he wished there never was anything like ourselves. Such a foolish boy! I wonder how people would get along without us? How

would factories and steamships get along without us? What would city folks do without us in winter? I think if it were not for us this same little boy, who is now warming his toes by the fire, would have to go to bed with cold feet. Think of all the good we do in this world. We cause employment to be given to many poor men in need of work, who are engaged in digging us out of the ground. Then other men are employed in loading us on cars or boats, on which we ride all over the country. Some of us cross the lakes and are unloaded at the docks of great cities. We go to the factories and warehouses, and help to make all sorts of things that people could not get along very well without. We help to run machinery, and, in addition, to supply people gas and kerosene with which to light their homes and places of business. Some of us find our way into the dwellings of the rich. We warm their rooms and cook their food, but these can buy us in large quantities, and do not set so high a value upon us, perhaps, as do the poor people."

Here a hand was laid on my shoulder, and mamma said, "What! John, you are asleep by the fire, instead of in bed!"

I awoke, and found that the talking of the ——— was but a dream, but for many days after I thought of what I had dreamed.

There are a good many families of my name. I belong to one that lives in the fields.

Yes, I know that I am black, and, perhaps, you may not care to form the acquaintance of black people; but only wait till I talk to you about the matter. Look over into that field. Do you not see the white horse trotting up to the black horse as though his friend? And the black dog, is not the white dog his companion for a stroll through the woods? And over there in the meadow, the black cow is lying beside the white cow, and no regard is paid to color. So, even if you are very white and I am very black, I think we can be good friends, do not you?

I must tell you where I live. Do you see that beautiful field over on the hillside? Well, my home is there. I shall not show you just where it is, because I do not want any one to know its location. It is a little secret kept by my wife and babies, and myself; but I can assure you that our home is bright and sunny and warm.

Do you wish to know about my little wife? She looks very much like me, and I think she is pretty. Perhaps that is because I love her. She is not so noisy as I am, for I do all the singing. My wife says I have a very sweet voice. I sing chirrup! chirrup! chirrup!

over and over again. I know only one tune, but we never get tired of it. It is better to sing one tune well, than to try to sing a good many tunes and sing all poorly. Nearly every one loves to hear us sing in the quiet of evening.

Perhaps you would like to hear about our babies. They are queer little things. They look very much like their mother, only their wings are not so beautiful. You would say, very likely, that they have no wings at all. Really, these are only the beginnings of wings. The babies were tiny things, but they grew until too large for their skin, which burst, and under it was a larger one to take its place. All of our people shed their skin six different times. But the babies eat and eat and eat, so that they may grow and grow and grow. You see they are in a hurry to grow until they have these beautiful wings, so that they, too, can sing. Do you know with what we sing? We sing with our wings, by rubbing one wing on the other, and that makes the pretty song. No, we do not sing with our mouth. We use that in eating. If you will come down to the field on a summer's evening you will hear my friends and myself sing.

I must say good-bye now, for my little wife will be waiting for me. When you come to see us, please do not step upon any member of our family.

My family name is found in the title of a book, by a well known author. Have you heard older people speak of a book called "The ——— on the Hearth?"

* * *

"We've such a lot of cunning chicks;
Old Silverwing came off with six,
And three are mine and three are Dick's—
Now, have you any chickens?

"You've only one you always keep?
And don't it cry, nor say, 'Peep, peep?'
Nor run about, nor go to sleep?
Why, what a funny chicken!

"And when you feed your other pets
It never sulks and never frets,
But rests content with what it gets—
Why, what a lovely chicken?

"How old is it? You do not know?
Older'n me?—why don't it grow?
I wish you'd let me see it—oh!
It's just a ——— chicken!"

—*Emma C. Dowd, in St. Nicholas.*

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